

Saving the Company.

By CARLETON HAZZARD.

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After a long line of incompetent stenographers Bradley congratulated himself when Alice Fuller took her place at the typewriter desk, and as though by magic the crooked places were made straight.

So quietly did the girl slip into the routine of the office and so unostentatiously did she accomplish results that Arthur Bradley did not realize all that she was doing. He had only the pleasant feeling that at last the office was running straight, and, manlike, he took the credit to himself.

It had been a struggle to get the office going at all, for the firm was in opposition to the trust, and everything possible was done to break up the newly established branch office.

More than once Bradley had narrowly escaped some trap laid for him, but for every blow struck at him he gave back as good. The letters from the home office were encouraging and intimated that if he would round out the first year there would be an increase of salary as well as the present of a block of stock.

The biggest feather in his cap was when the home office turned over to him the task of securing a contract for some \$2,000,000 worth of material.

"Such big contracts are usually handled from the home office," he explained to Alice Fuller as he gave her the letter with instructions to place it in the private letter file in the safe. "If they turn this matter over to me it is a sign that they have faith in my judgment. It's going to be a ticklish matter to figure on all that material at a price that will be low enough to capture the contract and still give us as much of a profit as possible."

"They probably realize that you are close to the contract, and they know that they can trust you," answered Alice. "It shows that this branch is becoming important."

She went quietly about her work, but there was a happy light in her eyes, for she was as much pleased at this sign of confidence as was Bradley himself.

Alice was not a girl of impulses, but she had come to have more of a liking for Bradley, and she took a pride in his success.

The week that followed was a busy one. Bradley figured far into the night on the problems of cost, and each morning he gave to Alice the results of his work, to be tabulated on the machine and filed in the safe until the figures should be complete. It was weary work with all the specifications and blanks, but at last the estimate was complete, and Bradley took it on to New York in person for the approval of the home office.

He was jubilant on his return. The president of the company had congratulated him on the excellence of his work and had hinted that the new London office might be opened soon with Bradley in charge.

But the jubilation was short lived, for two days later a long letter came from the New York office instructing the branch to alter the estimates in accordance with a set of figures some 30 per cent in advance of the original estimate.

"Here's a job for you," growled Bradley as he took the paper to Alice's desk. "I'll have to do as the home office says, but it's throwing away the contract and my chance of promotion."

"Are you certain that it is the order of the New York office?" asked Alice as she took up the sheets. "You know that this contract will mean a great deal to the trust if they are able to make it away from us. It means a great deal more to us to retain it."

"That's just it," complained Bradley. "They know that if we lose this contract we lose our fight for an independent existence and shall have to sell out to the trust at their own price. If we get it, it will mean that we can beat them and hold our own. Yet they raise my figures."

"And it would be worth a great effort to beat us," went on Alice. "Suppose that the trust people had some one planted in the home office who could copy the figures and send them to the trust officers. Suppose, too, that they supplied the people with our letter heads and envelopes. We would be unsuspecting and change the bid in accordance with instructions, only to find out that we had been duped after the bids had been opened and the contract awarded to the trust. I think you will find that they have bid only slightly lower than this, but much higher than your original figures."

"That's possible," admitted Bradley. "I'll wire the home office and find out." "And warn the traitor in the office that his plans have been discovered?" reminded Alice. "They will then bid below your figures and get the contract anyway. It would be best to hold on and take chances by yourself. It will be the only way to hold the contract."

"If I only could be sure," exclaimed Bradley. "But I can't act on mere guesswork." "This is something more than guesswork," insisted Alice. "In the first place, this letter is mailed from the Madison square station. That is in the building in which the trust has its main office. Our letters all come from the Wall street station, four or five miles away and nearest our office. They are using the same make of typewriter President Hammond's stenographer uses, but it is not the same machine. On the letters from our of-

fice there is a piece broken from the cross of every 't'."

"I think you are right!" cried Bradley as he compared two letters. "We'll pop in the original estimate, and when they come to open the bids out our trust friends will have a dozen fits."

"But answer this letter and say that changes have been made in the bid in accordance with instructions and that the bid has been submitted," directed Alice. "Then the traitor will not become alarmed and notify the trust to put in the lower bid."

"You're the general," cried Bradley admiringly. "I am only the second in command until this is straightened out. Do just as you please."

That evening a letter went to the home office reporting that the changes had been made as directed, but Bradley personally took to the office of the contracting company the original bid.

Two days later a long telegram arrived from the head office demanding the explanation of the changes to which Bradley made reference. It was Alice who wrote the telegram in reply, explaining what those changes were, and who wrote the second message declaring it to be impossible to alter the bid to the old figures, as they directed by wire.

The next morning President Hammond stamped into the office shortly after Bradley had come in.

"I came out on the fast train to see what it all means," he cried. "You have ruined the company by letting yourself be fooled in this fashion."

For reply Bradley brought out the letter he had received. It startled Hammond, for beyond question it was on the paper of the company and not on a cheap imitation. He sighed as he laid it down.

"I suppose that you cannot be blamed," he said dispiritedly, "but it means that the company is smashed by a trick of the trust."

"Not yet," declared Bradley, with a laugh. "Miss Fuller's quick eyes saw through the trick. We took a chance and put in the original bid. I think you will find that we are the lowest bidders, for the trust felt safe in keeping up their bid."

"If we win, you can have the London office next month," declared Hammond.

"Excuse me a moment," said Bradley as he slipped out to the outer office. "It's a go," he announced beamingly. "Miss Fuller says that she will come as Mrs. Bradley."

"Rather sudden?" asked Hammond. "It's sudden only in the recent realization that I have loved her ever since she came into the office," explained Bradley. "It took this crisis to force the fact home."

Alice looked in at the doorway. "The Wallington people telephone that your estimate has won the contract," she reported demurely, and to her great embarrassment Bradley kissed her under the approving eyes of the president of the company.

"We've tricked the tricky trust," he cried, "and we're going to London on our honeymoon."

"On my yacht," added the president. "We can't do too much for the girl whose clever brain saved the company. You're a lucky man, Bradley." "Don't I know it?" cried Bradley. "I knew it first."

Lungs and Long Life.

One of the most remarkable cases of longevity on record was that of an Englishman born in 1433, whose delicate appearance made all the doctors give him up when he was in the cradle. His chest was so narrow, says the report, that he seemed to have difficulty in breathing. Well, this young moribund, condemned by the doctors to die in short order, died in 1651 at the age of 119. He saw the reign of ten kings. Scoundri Hango, consul of Venice at Smyrna, measured only fifty-seven centimeters around the chest, and one of his lungs was diseased. Nevertheless he lived to the age of 115 years. He was married five times and had forty-nine children. When he was 100 years old he got his wisdom teeth. When he was 110 his hair turned black again. At 112 his eyebrows and his beard turned black.

Lucky In One Way.

"The late Valerian Gribayedoff," said a Chicago art editor, "was one of the first American newspaper sketch artists. On that account he leaves behind him a famous name. As Gribayedoff said himself the last time I visited him in Paris, his fame was due not to his great artistic skill, but to his luck in coming first. And he added, with a laugh, that it was always lucky to come early and avoid the rush, insuring the case of a restaurant on the Boulevard, in the Latin quarter, where a young poet had a large tureen of soup spilled over his coat one evening. The waiter, in response to the savage outcries of the poet, said good naturedly:

"Oh, well, you needn't alarm yourself, sir. There's no harm done. Our soup never stains after half past 7."

All In Red.

The playwrights over their supper of lobster boasted. "I," said the greatest of them, with a complacent glance at the two pure pearls in his shirt front, "decree the color of every actress' frock."

"That is carrying the regard for detail too far," said a playwright who had failed. "Not a bit of it," said the other. "If I didn't decide on the color of the dresses the stage manager would. Why, that must always be done. Otherwise, in their overmastering desire to draw all eyes to themselves, every actress would wear bright red. In my first play the frocks were forgotten in the general excitement, and at the first dress rehearsal all six actresses came on in the discovery scene in scarlet gowns."—New York Press.



FACE TO FACE.

A New Problem For Women.

In the looking-glass a woman often sees wrinkles, hollow circles under the eyes, crow's feet—all because she did not turn to the right remedy when worn down with those troubles which are distinctly feminine. Backache, lassitude, nervousness and the pains and drains of womanhood bring such untold suffering that the face is sure to show it.

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Many times women call on their family physicians, suffering as they imagine, one from dyspepsia, another from heart disease, another from liver or kidney disease, another from nervous exhaustion or prostration, another with pain here and

there, and in this way they all pass on alike to themselves and their easy-going and indifferent, or over-busy doctor, separate and distinct diseases, for which he assuming them to be such, prescribes his pills and potions. In reality they are only symptoms caused by some woman's disease. The physician ignorant of the cause of suffering, encourages this practice until large bills are made. The suffering patient gets no better, but probably worse, by reason of the delay, wrong treatment and consequent complications. A proper medicine like Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription, directed to the cause, would have entirely removed the disease thereby dispelling all those distressing symptoms, and insuring comfort instead of prolonged misery. It has been well said that "a disease known is half cured." In cases almost innumerable, after all other medicines had failed to help and doctors had said there was no cure possible, the use of Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription, supplemented, when necessary, by the medical advice and counsel of Dr. Pierce, has resulted in a perfect and permanent cure.

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